

## **Can we save the falling small independent stationery shop!**

It is beyond question that those small independent stationery shops have occupied an indispensable place in the daily life of many old Hongkongers. In fact, it symbolizes their collective memories as well as their nostalgia for childhood. Small independent stationery shops rose in the past few decades, which had settled the needs of students with lower prices of stationery. However, in recent years, the number of this kind of stationery shop is declining. Therefore, in this news report, I would like to shed light on the falling trend of independent stationery shops and whether it can survive in the near future.

In society of today, with the aid of globalization, consortium from all around the world starts to invest in Hong Kong and builds their own brand. In that sense, the bold entrance of chain stores and companies has radically transformed people's buying habits. Hong Kong citizens start to pursue the latest fashion and trends from Japan, American and other foreign countries, including the stationery sector. As a result, people have abandoned the outdated, old-fashioned independent stationery stores, and bought products from those large chain companies like MUJI from Japan. Therefore, the diminishing turnover of small independent stationery stores has shown a stark contrast with the sought-after chain companies. Under these circumstances, not only are the independent stationery stores unable to make their ends meet, not to mention paying the rent. It is understandable and intelligible, concerning why the number of small independent stationery shops is decreasing.

On top of the emergence of the large decline companies, the decrease of reliance on physical stationery is also the driving factor for the declining of mini-stationery shops. Undeniably, with the state-of-the-art technology nowadays, the internet has become the sweeping solution to all problems. Paper and pens are no longer viewed as the essential tools for writing since the appearance of laptops and mobile phones. Furthermore, people's reliance on physical stationery has dramatically decreased under the promotion of eco-friendly movement. Amid the environmentally friendly era, fewer and fewer people use stationery and paper. Instead, they use electronic devices. In the midst of the trend, apparently, no one will buy stationery from them, which endangers their survival.

Concerning the issue of traditional stationery shops, there are different opinions and avenues on saving them. For instance, spending an immense amount of money as subsidies towards those owners of independent stationery shops. This solution sounds plausible and impeccable. In fact, it is fundamentally flawed. As in no way is the above solution effective if we are not addressing the cause of the dire situation which is people's stereotypical thinking. They are of the view that independent stationery shops are equal to orthodox stationery shops. From a grander social viewpoint, unless the government can innovate those mini-stationery shops and create the trend of traditional shops; otherwise, the number of small independent stationery shops will keep falling or they might even disappear.

After all, even though the trend of globalization and the rise of chain stores are irreversible, the independent stationery shops are still worth being preserved as it represents the collective memories for all Hongkongers. Maybe, it is high time for us to act and devise an all-embracing solution to save those traditional stationery shops.